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The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

AUGUST 1943

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Sermon Illustrations

Contributed by Readers of **THE PULPIT**

'More Than a King'

In Lloyd Douglas' book *The Robe,* the slave, Demetrius, pushed his way through the crowd on Palm Sunday, trying to see who was the center of attraction. He got close enough to look upon the face of Jesus. Later another slave asked, "See him—close up?" Demetrius nodded. "Crazy?" Demetrius shook his head emphatically. "King?" "No," muttered Demetrius, "not a king." "What is he, then?" demanded the other slave. "I don't know," mumbled Demetrius, "but he is something more than a king."

Yes, we have found that Jesus is something more than a king. A king looks to his own affairs; it doesn't matter whether we live or die. But Jesus is the Son of our Father-God, and our Elder Brother. Can we ask more?—*H. V. Bartz, Wesley Methodist Church, Sioux City, Iowa.*

A Secret of Poise

I recently had my attention called to a novel by a Danish author, the story of an old peasant who on his deathbed made of his son this strange request: that every day he would go into the best room of the house and sit for a half-hour alone. The son, having promised his father this unusual thing, did it, and it became for him a cherished and transforming habit. The growing man looked forward to this half-hour of quiet each day; he thrived on it. He found that it did things down within him, and from it came wisdom and strength.

The art of quietude will do the same for one today, even in this noisy world. The promise in the prophecy of Isaiah is eternally true: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Said Faraday, the famous scientist: "The important thing is to know how to take all things quietly."—*J. Raymond Chadwick, Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.*

Men Still Hunger for Beauty

The speaker was telling us what was being done for the men who have been taken as prisoners of war and placed in detention camps. Of all the things he told us, one thing most impressed me. It seems that some of these have as many as 6,000 prisoners in them and that they are organized within their own group to govern themselves as much as possible. Within the camps are musicians, professors, mechanics, farmers, and experts and workers in many fields. They are provided with various kinds of equipment, instruments, tools, books. One of their favorite occupations is gardening. So tools and seeds are given to them for their gardens within the barbed wire enclosures. This is the thing that so deeply impressed me. These men, who are rarely adequately fed, did not ask for vegetable seeds, but almost always for flower seeds! Hungry as they are, they want beauty, food for their souls, balm for their rent hearts.

Here is a parable for these times. For not only the prisoners of war want a touch of beauty in their lives; all of us feel that need keenly. We want to find beauty in the midst of so much ugliness, goodness where there is so much of evil. How clear it becomes that the church of Christ must maintain itself as a source of truth, beauty, goodness, light and love in a world surrounded by ugliness and destruction!—*Alfred L. Creager, St. Mark's Reformed Church, Cumberland, Md.*

Bringing Peace to the River of Death

Up the Rio das Mortes (River of Death) in the Matto Grosso, to the country of the Chavante Indians recently journeyed a seven-man peace commission, sent by Brazil's Indian Bureau. Such commissions have made peace with most of the distrustful tribes of the hinterlands by following the Bureau's inflexible rule: "Die if necessary, but never kill."

But of all the Indians living in the jungles of the Matto Grosso, the fiercest and most unpredictable are the Chavantes. For centuries they have fought a guerilla war with what they believe is one great tribe of white men.

At a chavante village, Dr. Genesio Pimentel Barbosa, head of the commission, called a parley. The Indians silently listened to his offers, brought fruit for the white men to eat. In a few minutes six of the white men of peace were violently sick. The fruit had been poisoned. Still no members of the expedition laid a finger on his rifle. Even when the Chavantes attacked them with poisoned arrows and slashing machets, the white men did not shoot. Only one man of the seven escaped into the jungle.

More recently the River of Death bore another expedition sent by the Indian Bureau. Its purpose: to find the six bodies, to try once again to talk peace to the Chavantes. There would be no reprisals, for the Indian Bureau still insists, "Never kill." (From *Time Magazine)—Donald D. Dod, Presbyterian Church, Malin, Ore.*

'That Which I Gave, I Have'

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* publishes an excellent religious page each Saturday. It is ably edited by Robert Kevin. In a recent issue of the paper the following appeared on this page: "Back in the early twenties the Asbury Methodist Church of Scranton needed a new organ. A prosperous silk manufacturer in the congregation, with his wife, offered the gift of an instrument costing $25,000. The installation was made and the donor showed such personal devotion in the work as it proceeded that he discovered a new field of permanent interest. Then came the depression years. The silk manufacturing business collapsed. The once well-to-do factory owner was forced to turn to other kinds of work. Today George W. Frisbie is on the caretaker's staff of the church to which once he gave an organ. To a recent visitor he revealed his philosophy: "That which I kept, I lost. That which I gave, I have."—*Melvin W. Crump, First Baptist Church, Norristown, Pa.*

On Troubled Waves

From an anonymous writer in the *American Mercury* comes an eyewitness account of the deprivation in Greece. No one can realize the horror of starvation until he has read of the bare cupboards in a Greek kitchen today. Out in the streets, urchins grapple for the possession of tainted garbage to fill their emaciated bodies. With secretive stealth people hide their dead in order to obtain their rations. Convulsive cries come from babies starving from the lack of milk.

The Mediterranean is a perilous sea, but on the crest of its waves are borne ships laden with provisions for the starving Greek people. The children stand long hours at the shore, awaiting the Red Cross mercy ships. Today, Christ still walks on troubled, tempestuous waves, bringing joy and hope to famished bodies and souls.—*Jonathan Hochstatter, Congregational Church, Harrison, Ohio.*

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The Pulpit

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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It Is Belief That Matters

BY WINTHROP S. HUDSON

If thou canst believe, all things are possible. Mark 9:23.

A COMMON TENDENCY is to dwell on the importance of action, deeds, movement and to neglect to emphasize the importance of beliefs, convictions and affirmations. The end of life, we say, is action. It is the thing we *do* that counts—the drink of water we give, the kindness we show, the welcome we extend, the visit we make. It is our deeds, our works, the fruit we bear which justifies us. But back of those acts—provoking them and compelling them—are our beliefs. It is our beliefs which provide the motive power for our acts.

The classic example of the man who *did* something is the story of the two men who built their house of life—the one on the rock and the other on the sand. When the storm came one house tumbled in, and the other stood unmoved. In this parable Jesus was speaking of his teachings and of the response which men made to them. The point of the story is that one man did something about those teachings, while the other man did not. The distinction was in the matter of action. "He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is likened unto a man who built his house upon a rock. . . . He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not is likened unto a man who built his house upon the sand."

What was the difference between these two men? The sayings of Jesus were present in both instances, and both men heard them. Why was it that the one man did something about them, and the other did not? The man who built his house upon the rock listened to those sayings of Jesus, believed in them and acted upon them. He took them seriously; they rooted themselves in his life, they became his abiding convictions, and they compelled him to get out and get busy and do something about them. The other man listened and that was all. No convictions came, no affirmations were made, no beliefs resulted; and not believing, he did nothing. It was the difference in their beliefs which spelled the difference in their actions.

Move up and down the Gospels and see how often Jesus presses home the importance of belief. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "Ye have seen, and in seeing did not believe." "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

I

Our beliefs are important, for one thing, because in them is to be found the cure for many of our dilemmas and the solution for many of our baffling problems. Many of us struggle with our own sense of inadequacy, with our seemingly limited endowment, with our failure to accomplish the things we desire to accomplish. Such a mood yields to only one thing—belief. Belief in ourselves and our capabilities. And when we so believe we find that we have the power to do the things we want to do.

"If thou canst believe," said Jesus, "all things are possible." That is to say: if thou canst believe, thou canst do—even that which seems impossible. Our beliefs lend us a truly amazing power. There is an old folk tale about a very ordinary young man, back in the glamorous days of knighthood, who was afraid to test his skill at arms on the field of battle. One day however some of his fellows, thinking to play a joke on him, presented him with a sword which they said possessed a magical power and so long as he used this particular sword he never would be defeated. To their surprise and amazement, he immediately put the sword to work and won victory after victory. With each tournament in which he participated, his fame increased and finally he was hailed as the greatest swordsman of the realm. Then, thinking that now it would do no harm, one of the men disclosed to him the jest and told him that the weapon, far from possessing any magical power, was merely an ordinary sword. No longer sustained by a belief in the supernatural powers of his weapon, the young man became panic-stricken; fear filled his heart, and terror took possession of his mind. No longer believing, he could no longer act. "Nurture your minds with great thoughts," said Disraeli, "for to believe in the heroic makes heroes." If thou canst believe, all things are possible.

Many of us have lost our faith in men. We are suspicious of every person we meet. We think the tradesmen will cheat us, our children will deceive us, and our friends will trick us. When someone does us a kindness, we immediately find ourselves asking: "Well, what does he want? What does he expect to get out of it?" The cure for both us and for others is to be found in our beliefs. As the poet Yeats described his experience:

> I have believed the best of every man,
> And find that to believe is enough
> To make a bad man show him at his best,
> Or even a good man swing his lantern higher.

Many of us are worried. We are discouraged about

life, about the ills which beset us, and the fate which overtakes us. The only cure for that is positive beliefs rather than negative worries. We need to dwell upon great affirmations. So often, for example, when we are in difficulty, we find ourselves saying: "I am in trouble, great trouble. See how impossible my situation is." Anyone who knows anything about mental processes knows that the more a person keeps such thoughts in his mind, the more trouble he is likely to have. The more we hold our discouragements, fears and anxieties in the center of our attention, the greater will be our discouragement and fear and anxiety. We must be affirmative. We must turn our backs on the negations of worry, and give ourselves to the affirmations of belief.

> The Lord *is* my shepherd, I shall not want.
> He *leadeth* me beside the still waters,
> He *maketh* me to lie down in green pastures,
> He *restoreth* my soul.

That is affirmative. Such positive beliefs focus our thoughts on the things we can trust. In anxiety such an attitude gives us sustaining convictions, in discouragement it gives us abiding hopes, in trouble it centers our attention on eternal possibilities. Our thoughts slip away from the worries which beset us and begin to draw upon the deep resources of an affirmative faith.

As we banish worries and discouragements by affirmations and not negations, so God himself is to be found only through believing. A young man once came to a minister, so it is said, very much troubled. He didn't believe in God. In fact he didn't believe in much of anything, and he recited at great length all the things in which he disbelieved. "You believe that two and two make four?" the minister asked. "Yes." "And that night follows day, and spring follows winter?" "Yes, of course." "Well, then, you believe a good deal. The thing for you to do is to discover all the things in which you do believe, and to forget the things you don't believe, for it is only by adding little beliefs together that we arrive at great beliefs." In finding God, as in facing life, we need the attitude of the man who said to Jesus, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." For it is only by affirmation, and not by negation, that we can come unto him.

II

"What must I do to be saved?" So asked the Philippian jailer. The answer was not that he should first of all do something, but that he should *believe* something. The end of any life, to be sure, is the fruit it produces, the action it takes, the good it does, but there is a very clear and a very intimate connection between fruits and roots. It is the roots that make possible the fruit, beliefs that produce deeds, and convictions that compel one to act.

Contemplate, for a moment, the people of your acquaintance who are leading active, purposeful, worthwhile lives. Are they not possessed by great beliefs, deep convictions and a profound sense of personal responsibility? Then consider those who are leading lives of relative uselessness, making no real contribution to their home, their church, their community, or to life in general. Are they not the ones who have no abiding convictions, who are not sure that life has meaning, and who are conscious of no underlying purpose for their lives? Like Mr. Dooley, they say: "It's sometimes yes, and sometimes no. Sometimes I think it is mostly yes, and then again I think it is mostly no." Failing to believe one way or another, they fail to act. Of how many a futile, negative, useless life are the words of Marcellus in Hamlet the explanation:

> Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
> And will not let belief take hold of him.

Many people have said to me, as they probably have said to you, that they do not think that it makes much difference what a person believes, so long as he tries to do the right thing. It is what one does, say these folk, that is important. Of course, what one does is of primary importance. But a person will not do anything, either right or wrong, unless he believes something. For to do something requires that we believe something to be worth doing.

A friend of mine likes to tell of the man who was so good that he was good for nothing. He didn't do anything bad and he didn't do anything good. He did nothing. That was the trouble with the priest and the Levite in the story of the Good Samaritan. They did nothing wrong. They simply did nothing. They had no burning conviction which would compel them to halt on a hurried journey and minister to an injured man by the side of the road.

The Lord is never satisfied with negative virtues, with a passively good life, with a respectable person who does nothing wrong. He is interested in men and women who are ready to go out of their way to do the things that ought to be done, to give battle for righteousness, to do a kindness, to see that justice is done. And to do that—great beliefs and deep convictions, which trouble our conscience and stir us to action, are necessary.

Christian living has always been rooted in certain profound convictions about God and about man and about the world in which we live. We find these convictions expressed in the Scriptures and in our creeds; we repeat them in our prayers; we hear them in Sunday school; and we listen to them in our sermons. But it is not enough to talk about them, listen to them, and recite them verbally in parrot-like fashion. We must take them into our lives and let them take root. From the beliefs of Christianity, they must become our beliefs, so that we will do something about them. As Kagawa once said: "We preach and pray, and pray and preach, and there are wonderful preachers everywhere. But people are not satisfied with preaching and praying. Can't we believe these things deeply enough so that we will do something about them?"

III

While it is important to believe—merely to believe in order that our lives may be saved from futility and inaction—it is more important *what* we believe. As the author of the book of James said, "Even the devils believe," but the trouble is that they believe the wrong

things. The truth of the answer which was made to the Philippian jailer—that to be saved he must first of all *believe* something—is becoming more apparent every day. For one cannot doubt that it is the beliefs that save man, when it is becoming increasingly evident that it is beliefs that destroy him also.

"The life of mankind is being destroyed today," declares Harold Cooke Phillips, "not because man has no beliefs, but precisely because of his passionate belief in and loyalty to false and self-destroying ends. Though we cease to believe in the Living God, we do not cease to believe. It is no mere coincidence that an age which has witnessed the most widespread and thoroughgoing repudiation of Christian beliefs is plagued by the most fanatical and the crudest sort of beliefs and superstitions. Strictly speaking the conflict today is not between religion and irreligion, but between rival faiths. The most terrible thing about the new paganism is its presuppositions, its beliefs."

So, the troubles which assail us in the world today do not come from lack of belief. Far from that. That would be sad; yes, it would be tragic. But it would not be dangerous. Danger has come because men believe deeply and profoundly in false and self-destroying ends. Merely to urge people to be good, kindly, forgiving and the like, without relating these qualities to the basic convictions of the Christian gospel, is not a message that will bring light into the darkness of this world. Early Christianity, it has been said, "outthought" the pagan world and hence "out-lived" it, and Christian living today, if it is to bring order out of chaos, peace out of conflict, and good out of tragic circumstance, must be rooted in the great affirmations of our faith:

I believe in God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ and in his way of life.
I believe in the cross of Christ as the central fact of history.
I believe in the resurrection as a vindication of the way of the cross.
I believe in man as a child of God and an inheritor of the promise.

Such beliefs as these, as they become rooted in our lives and expressed in our actions, are our only hope for the redemption of mankind. "O Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief."

If we had paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children, we would now be living in a jungle of weeds.

LUTHER BURBANK.

We need a positive reaffirmation of what life is and can be. We need a new, bright sense of its glory and significance, and of the preciousness of the least of the human vessels into which it has been poured.

New York Times.

No man ever prayed without learning something.

EMERSON.

Is This War a Judgment of God?

By A. D. Cornett

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Romans 2:3.

I HAVE put the subject of this sermon in the form of a question, "Is this war a judgment of God?" That is a question which many thoughtful people are asking themselves in these trying days. And many other persons who could not be classed among the "thoughtful" have a vague feeling of unrest and anxiety which is probably the result of some such question stirring in their subconscious mind.

Now various answers may be given to that question. Some persons would quickly reply in the negative. They would say that God has nothing to do with this catastrophe. It is simply the result of human folly and sin, and there is no need to bring God into our interpretation of it. On the other hand there are many people who answer the question in the affirmative, and do so quite glibly. They haven't thought very seriously about it. They have rather jumped to the conclusion that it is a striking example of the judgment of God upon human wickedness. They see his hand at work very clearly in every disaster which falls within human experience.

I invite you to consider with me this problem today. I do not pretend to offer you any complete and satisfying solution, but it may aid us in clarifying our own thinking to study it together.

GOD'S JUDGMENT—ITS PRINCIPLES

If I were asked this question, "Is this war a judgment of God?" I should reply in the affirmative. I should say: "Yes, it is!" And then I should like to go on and explain more precisely what I mean by that.

I believe that God's judgment is at work in the world, in human society, all the time, every day. It is not a spasmodic thing which occurs only occasionally in some great national or world-wide disaster. It is at work all the time, but many of us are so blind, so occupied with our own personal affairs, that we become insensitive to the working of God, and we are awakened to it only when some great crisis such as a world war occurs.

And I should also like to say that this term "judgment" is apt to be misleading. When we speak of a "judgment of God" there flashes into our minds a picture of a court scene, and God is pictured as a venerable judge who is trying a case. He hears the evidence,

weighs the arguments pro and con, reaches a decision, and then pronounces a penalty upon the guilty. Our idea of a judge is of one who is not personally concerned in the case which is being tried. He sits as it were on the outside, reviews the evidence, and pronounces sentence.

That is the mental picture which the term judgment calls up in our mind. But like many of our symbolic terms the analogy which it draws is hardly correct. It seems to me that we may get a clearer view of the truth if we think of it in this way. We know that there are certain great "laws," or ways in which things act, at work in the world all the time, such as the law of gravitation. That law is at work continuously. It is necessary for the correct functioning of the physical world. Most of the time I am quite unaware of it, although it is having an influence upon my body every second. But suppose I defy that law, and walk over the edge of a precipice. I shall suddenly become aware of the pull of gravitation. I shall fall, and be dashed to pieces at the foot of the cliff.

JUDGMENT AT WORK IN SOCIETY

Now just as there are these "laws of nature" in the physical world, so there are moral laws at work in the social life of humanity. They are working all the time. There are some ways of social action which tend to bring strength, and stability, and peace, and prosperity, and happiness to human society. And there are other ways of acting which bring weakness, and distrust, and suspicion, and hatred, and war, and disaster to human society. These moral laws are at work continuously, but for the most part we are unware of them. We just follow the beaten path, the tradition, the custom, the popular way in our social group, quite unaware of the slow but steady undermining of the social structure caused by our ignorance or defiance of right moral principles, until one day when a severe test comes, when a crisis arrives, a great collapse of society occurs, and then we are suddenly shocked wide awake, and we say, "This must be a judgment of God."

Now it seems to me that it is correct to speak of this war as a judgment of God when we think of it in that way. It doesn't mean that God has suddenly taken an interest in human affairs, and has pronounced a sentence upon our sin, and sent this war as a penalty for human guilt. But it means that God's judgment is continually at work in the world, every day and every hour. There are great moral laws which control the working of human society. When we ignore and break those laws there takes place a steady disintegration of character. And when that disintegration reaches a certain point, human society cannot stand the strain of a severe test, and it collapses in some world-wide disaster such as this war, and we suddenly wake up and say, "Surely this is a judgment of God."

THE COLLAPSE OF FRANCE

With that general principle of the way in which the judgment of God is continually at work in the world, let us look at a few illustrations in connection with this present war, which may serve to make it clear.

To my mind one of the most striking illustrations of the working out of this principle is found in the collapse of France. For some generations there had been taking place a slow undermining of French character and integrity. To a large extent the French people, particularly the wealthy and intellectual classes, had turned their backs upon the Christian church. There were a few magnificent cathedrals, but they were frequently empty, and the formal religious ceremonies which were carried on therein did not influence the moral and social life of the people. Paris had become notorious for its flagrant immorality. The chief ambition of the so-called upper classes was to get rich and to lead a life of luxury and self-indulgence. Home life declined. Children were regarded as a burden or a nuisance to be avoided, and the French knew how to avoid them. Now this slow but steady undermining of character resulted in such weakness and instability that when the great test came France collapsed like a house of cards.

Some of you may feel like saying, "Why didn't this show up in the first great war?" My reply would be that it did. There was a period during the First World War when the French military power almost collapsed. Whole armies were in a state of mutiny. If the Germans had struck then they would have broken through. British troops were sent to reinforce those parts of the line. Sternly repressive measures were taken. France had one great leader left, "the Tiger" Clemenceau, and she came through that trial. But her losses were terrific. She was bled white. She did not have the moral strength to make a complete recovery. The best and most patriotic elements in the population had been killed off, the less worthy had been left to breed their kind, and when the second test came France collapsed. It was a judgment of God. It was the inevitable working out of a moral law. Righteousness alone exalteth a nation and makes her strong.

HOW JUDGMENT CAME TO GERMANY

Think now of the way in which the principle worked out in the case of Germany. After the first great war when her armies were defeated in the field, her people at home were starved into submission, Germany was filled with a spirit of resentment and a desire for revenge. This was true not so much of the common ordinary workingman, but of the military class and of the industrial leaders. These leaders, filled with a spirit of hatred and a determination to get revenge, deliberately discarded all moral principles. They decided to follow a policy of deceit and fraud in their relations with other peoples. They accepted Hitler's dictum that "if you tell a lie often enough it will come to be accepted as a truth." They played upon the natural egotism of the common people with their doctrine of racial pride and supremacy, and they catered to the lowest instincts of the mob by urging them to persecute the Jews. They encouraged the sadistic instincts of gangsters by allowing them to perpetrate unmentionable cruelties in concentration camps. In a word they accepted the motto of Satan in Milton's "Paradise Lost"—"Evil, be thou my good!"

And the inevitable result of the working out of this principle was war, suffering, disaster, death, not only to themselves, but to many millions of decent and comparatively innocent common people. These immoral principles inevitably bring war and disaster, just as trust, and mutual good will, and honor, bring peace and prosperity. It is the working out of the judgment of God.

WHEN GREAT BRITAIN FORGOT GOD

We turn now to the working out of the principle in Great Britain. I think we can honestly say that Great Britain did everything possible under the leadership of Ramsay MacDonald, Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain to avoid the catastrophe of another war. But she seems to have been overcome by a spirit of apathy and indifference. Instead of heeding the warning of Winston Churchill, she indulged in wishful thinking. She did not want another war, and persuaded herself that it would not come. She refused to intervene when Japan seized Manchukuo, when Mussolini seized Abyssinia, and when Franco led a rebellion against the constitutional government of Spain. She yielded when Germany took Austria and dismembered Czechoslovakia. That wakened her. Then she feverishly tried to get ready, and finally took her stand when Hitler invaded Poland. It was almost, but not quite, too late. And Britain has suffered severely for her apathy. It is in a way a judgment of God, the working out of his moral principles.

May I quote a paragraph from the pen of a clergyman of Bournemouth, England, which seems to illustrate this point.

> We have been a pleasure-loving people, dishonoring God's day, picnicking and bathing—now the seashores are barred, no picnics, no bathing. We have preferred motor travel to churchgoing—now there is a shortage of motor fuel. We have ignored the ringing of church bells calling us to worship—now the bells cannot ring except to warn us of invasion. We have left the churches half empty when they should have been filled with worshipers—now they are in ruins. We would not listen to the way of peace—now we are forced to listen to the way of war. The money we would not give to the Lord's work now is taken in taxes and higher prices. The food for which we forgot to say thanks now is unobtainable. The service we refused to give God now is conscripted for the country. Lives we refused to live under God's control now are under the nation's control. Nights we would not spend watching unto prayer now are spent in anxious air-raid precautions.

CANADA COMES TO JUDGMENT

What about ourselves? How does this principle of judgment apply to Canada? There have been many elements in our social, moral and political life in Canada which have not been right in the sight of God, and the inevitable weakness which these social sins have caused is revealed in this present time of testing. As a people we have been very prone to worship things, to estimate a man's worth in terms of his wealth, to value men for their bank account. Surely we are being taught now during this time of war, if we are only willing to learn, that only men of strength and character can save us.

Think of the way we treated the young men of Canada during the economic depression! Many of them were allowed to tramp back and forth across the country as transients begging for food from door to door looking for work. For many of them old newspapers spread out on the cement floor of a police cell were their only bed at night. They had committed no crime; they were looking for work. And the government spokesman said it would cost $50,000,000 to care for them, and we couldn't afford it! And today the government is calling for the youth of our land, calling them up to fight and to be killed, in a war that is costing us $3,000,000 a day, for the preservation of our nation's life.

'EACH DAY IS JUDGMENT DAY'

Men and women, this war is a judgment of God upon human society. But God is not sitting up there on the outside just looking on and in a petulant mood punishing us for our sin and our neglect. God is a mighty spiritual Power who is always at work in human society, fulfilling his purpose. But in such times of crisis as the present, we can see a little more clearly than we ordinarily do just how he works. If we are humble enough to learn, and wise enough to follow the truth, we may be cleansed and purified by this war as by fire, and learn some lessons which will guide us, and enable us to fulfill more perfectly his good will for all his human children in the days to come.

During the First World War John Oxenham wrote a little verse which he called "Judgment Day":

> The nations are in the proving,
> Each day is Judgment Day;
> And the peoples He finds wanting,
> Shall pass—by the Shadowy Way.

Looking Toward Victory

VICTORY will impose on us great responsibilities and will confront us with great difficulties. If we are to surmount those difficulties and lay the foundations for a better international and social order we shall need wisdom and unselfishness beyond anything we ourselves possess, and for which we must depend altogether on the Holy Spirit.

If we are to approach these tasks in a fit state to deal with them, we must seek the help of the Holy Spirit to keep us free from the bitterness and vindictiveness so hard to avoid when fighting a barbarously cruel enemy. We need endurance without embitterment; we must seek to do justice without vindictiveness. It is a difficult balance to maintain.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

WE are all of us fellow travelers along the same road and, as such, it behooves us to work together for one common purpose, the greatest amount of happiness for each and all of our companions.

HENDRIK VAN LOON.

'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?'

By Williston Wirt

Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. II Peter 3:4.

SCHOLARS tell us that if the books of the New Testament were arranged chronologically, the final position would not be given to the Book of Revelation, but to what is called the Epistle of Second Peter. Most scholars agree that it dates from the middle of the second century, A.D. That would place its composition about the year 150—over a century after the death of Jesus, and well after the great missionary activity of Paul was over.

The primary vigor of the Christian movement had established small units of Christian believers in many parts of the civilized world. But a recession had set in, and they were bewildered. They were bewildered, chiefly, because the first Christians were largely eschatologists. That is, they firmly believed that God would pass a gigantic miracle, and wipe out the kingdoms of this earth in a sudden cataclysm. Jesus would appear upon the clouds and establish a new order of life—the Kingdom of God on earth. That was their hope and expectation. But over a hundred years had passed, and here it was the middle of the second century, and still no sign of any such consummation was visible.

In Second Peter you catch the echo of their disappointment and bewilderment. Hope deferred had begun to wear thin. "Where is the promise of his coming?" we read; "for, from the day that our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

I choose this text for our thought this morning because it is not hard to identify this mood of bewilderment with the attitude of many Christians today. Where is the promise of his coming?

Of course, we are not looking for any cataclysm. But we had hoped that the Christ spirit would come into men's hearts more than it has. We had hoped, after November 1918, that the days of brutality and bloodshed might be gradually eradicated. We had hoped that God's love would "spread from pole to pole," and a new day of peace and scientific prosperity would be ushered in. Instead of that, these ancient brutalities are more terrible than ever. The pagan urges of Caesar and Attila now bid for domination on a global scale. The world does not seem to be getting anywhere in a spiritual sense. As someone has quipped, "The more it changes, the more it is the same!" "From the day our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

Where is the promise of his coming? When will God's Kingdom on earth be established?

Now it occurs to me that the men who first expressed those pessimistic remarks would have liked nothing better than to be able to ask a few questions of you and me. We could tell them whether their pessimism was justified. Looking backward, we could complete the picture for them. For the same is true of us. We would give a good deal to consult one of our descendants two thousand years in the future, wouldn't we? It would help our present state of apprehension a great deal.

Suppose, at least, that we attempt to answer the questions these second-century Christians were asking. Suppose we note the outcome of their major problems. It is just possible that it might shed some light upon ours.

I

We can say to those early Christians that their desire that Jesus should return upon the clouds and institute a new order of righteousness miraculously—that particular hope was doomed to disappointment. One cannot read his New Testament without realizing that this particular belief was deeply imbedded in early Christian thought. For of course they had no such knowledge of their environment as have we. They saw nothing contradictory about God's breaking his own laws in order to impose his will by direct fiat. It is God's will that men should dwell together in unity. The established order was not God's will, obviously. The logic, then, was plain: God would himself intervene, and establish the order of his desire. Second-century Christians believed that. They believed it would happen in their lifetime. Many of them lived in constant expectancy—bags all packed, as it were; affairs all arranged; all set for the thunderclap that should inaugurate the event.

You catch the intense poignancy, therefore, of that second-century cry: Where is the promise of his coming? We've waited and waited—what's the matter with God, anyway?

From our point of vantage, looking backward across the years, we can say to those anticipators of divine intervention: Those particular hopes will never be realized. *God never has, and never will, intervene in that way. God does not break his own laws. He acts through them, never against them!*

We can say to them: There is apparently no short cut to utopia. There is apparently no miraculous way out of the mess men find themselves involved in. Apparently, God expects us to work out our own salvation.

From our point of vantage, we can see the value of that. We can see how much more Godlike—how much better it is for humanity. There isn't a parent but understands the principle. Our children get themselves into scrapes—scrapes that we, with our advanced wisdom, find it hard to excuse. And they call to us elders: "Help! Get me out of this!" And sometimes we are not as wise as God—we rush in and save them. We

"take the rap" for them. But do our children learn when we do that? Do they realize their mistakes and resolve never, under any circumstance, to repeat them? Or do they figure: good old dad and mother, I can always fall back on them!

It's not easy to be a parent! It's not easy to know what is best for our children! But part of our task is to make our children stand on their own feet. Let them take their own punishment. Let them learn their lessons the hard way.

That's what God does with us. I don't think it is easy for him. I think it would be far easier simply to "pass a miracle." Many times one appreciates those words spoken by the Lord God Jehovah in the play "Green Pastures": "Even being God ain't no bed of roses!"

Where is the promise of his coming? The Gospel of John reveals the true answer: Jesus is never coming back, because he has never gone away. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." He isn't going to do the easy thing—miraculously rescue us from the error of our ways. He works upon us from within, to reinforce our strength of character. He is already here, working in and through spiritual law, to help us bring in a better order of human relations—one that we shall doubly appreciate because we ourselves have shared in its creation.

II

A second thing we could say to those second-century Christians is that all things *do not* continue as they were from the beginning of creation. That was one of the pagan ideas of the Greco-Roman world. Life is a wheel, they believed, going round and round. It is a series of recurring cycles, with different generations simply duplicating the pattern of bygone periods. Naturally, they didn't have much evidence, for historic records were crude and scarce. But we labor under no such handicap. We know that creation *moves*. We trace the path of evolution up through the ages, and we term life a pilgrimage, a cavalcade.

And one of the chief influences which has served to keep humanity on the march has been Christianity. For Christianity believes in a goal. Christianity believes in growth toward an objective. Christianity believes that man is progressing toward an ideal—that human nature is struggling upward—that human character is reaching out after the perfection of Christ.

St. Paul often proclaimed this. "Brethren, I do not count myself yet to have attained. But one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forward to the things that are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ!"

Now I am aware that the old pagan idea of life as a cycle is still attractive to some. Spengler voiced it in his *Decline of the West*. Another modern pagan puts it thus: "Scientific materialism warmly denies that there exists any such thing as purpose in the universe, or that events have any ulterior motive or goal to which they are striving." I don't suppose the man who wrote that ever realized how closely his thought paralleled that statement in Second Peter. "From the day our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." "Scientific materialism warmly denies that events have any goal toward which they are striving."

Over against that lies the record of these two thousand years of Christian influence, with all their amazing advances in human welfare. Indeed, I do not see how any of us could face the prospect of this present world war, if we did not have faith that out of it will come a better social order. If we were convinced that new attempts to found a league of nations would likewise fail; if we thought that no new freedoms would be won, no new era of social improvement would follow, then indeed would our hopes falter, and our will to win be listless.

I liked this sentence that I found in a recent editorial: "The United States is not fighting to make a better world. We want a better world, because in this one we are having to fight!"

There speaks the true Christian! There is expressed the real Christian doctrine. Christians are not in the world to bewail its unchanging wickedness. Christians are in the world to *create change,* to help bring a better world into being.

A world at war, therefore, is not something we should beg God to "take over" miraculously. It is something for us, his children, to get rid of. He has not left us without a witness as to how it can be accomplished. But he does expect us to work out our own salvation. He has created us free agents, able to create hell on earth, or heaven on earth, according as our social relations are basically selfish or unselfish.

All things do not continue as they were from the beginning. Things are what we make them. If we press on toward the mark of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ, we shall eliminate war and every other fruit of selfishness and greed.

III

Finally, a third thing we could say, as the result of our fuller knowledge, to those second-century Christians: Over a long sweep of time, material values are but brief and transitory. Spiritual values endure. "Lo, all the pomp of yesterday is one with Nineveh and Tyre." The ancients had seven wonders of the world. Who can remember them today? All are gone except the pyramids, and they are half buried in desert sands. The greatest library in all the world was once in Alexandria. There were the archives containing the records of all the ancient conquerors. Today the chief relic of Alexandria is the Septuagint, the translation of the Hebrew scripture, the record of spiritual truth.

But why list these? The Christian needs naught else by way of illustration than the witness of Christ himself. The disciples couldn't understand it when Jesus told them that the time would come when their beautiful temple would be in ruins—not one stone would be left standing upon another. Today a Moslem shrine occupies the site of the ancient temple in Jerusalem. Not only is not one stone left standing upon another—the site itself is forbidden territory to Hebrew

worshipers. But the words and deeds of him who trod the paths of Palestine as an unorthodox teacher and preacher—today those constitute the most widely known and most universally treasured bits of knowledge in all the world. That man, despised and rejected by all but a handful of his own generation, is now the inspiration for all that is noblest and best in life.

And we who are aware of all this—might we not say to those second-century Christians: Don't be too terribly upset by the material turmoil about you. Don't think it an utter calamity if the *Pax Romana* is terminated and your material status quo is destroyed. Whatever befalls, they will not be able to destroy the spirit of Christianity. Love, crushed to earth, will rise again. No dictator, no matter how ruthless, will ever be able to quench the divine fire in the human breast!

Rebuilding Life

By John U. Stephens

Establishing the things that remain. Revelation 3:2.

TO a friend who had complained that the world seemed drained of all its sweets, Charles Lamb is said to have replied: "Drained of all its sweets? I don't know what you mean. Are there not roses and violets still in the earth, and the sun and moon still reigning in heaven?" Yes, when earth is drained of its familar sweets, we are prone to overlook the things that remain. Absorbed in loss, we readily conclude that all is lost. Yet when the universe takes with one hand she often gives with the other hand. Experience, we have heard, is what is left when everything else is gone. Yet in that instance what remains is the prize bestowed by loss itself.

Blackstone Studios

But not all is lost: "Are there not roses and violets still in the earth, and the sun and moon still reigning in heaven?" Much is still ours. Life must be rebuilt around its affirmatives. We must establish the things that remain.

To be sure, we are offered easier alternatives. With characteristic picturesqueness James Whitcomb Riley stated these when he remarked: "I could have wept, had not the Almighty given me the blessed gift of cussin'." Well, weeping and "cussin' " may have their place as safety valves. They *may* have. But one does not fasten a locomotive's safety valve permanently open. The train does not run well in that condition! Yet how many a life, when the world is drained of its familiar sweets, sits permanently on a siding, in sorrow or in resentment, with tears or with cussin', when it should be pulling a needed load in a needy world! To put it differently, sorrow and resentment are both negative. They concentrate upon loss. But life must be rebuilt around its affirmatives. Establish the things that remain.

Much more remains than we at first imagine. Indeed, were we to sit down with pencil and paper and detailedly itemize the things for which we are thankful—not forgetting roses and violets, and sun and moon—our pencil would need sharpening before the list was complete. Then if we should keep this list and review it daily, adding to it as we were able, brooding upon it when our thoughts were free, we should find before long a new lightness in our footstep and a fresh enthusiasm in all we do. Why? Because we are rebuilding life around its affirmatives. This is good psychology and good religion. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." That is good psychology and good religion. It is not quite the whole of Christianity, but it is an important part of it. It places at the core of living an affirmative. Establish the things that remain.

I

Let us assume however that, as nearly as can be, the world has been drained of all its sweets: even the roses snowed under, and the moon curtained. What certainly is left? Not even all of the past is gone! Our happy memories remain. "God gave us memory that we might have roses in December." Shall we regret the goodness of the past? Its memory is with us still, to lift the burden of our day. Shall we lament? An old Greek epitaph bears witness to a better wisdom than lamenting:

> Pythonax and his sister here lie at rest
> Within the grave's embrace,
> While yet their lovely youth is unfulfilled;
> Wherefore their father, Megaritos, willed
> That in this place a consecrated stone should rise,
> To mark his undying thanks that they have lived.

Megaritos was rebuilding life around an affirmative. He had learned to establish the things that remain.

Thus happy memories, welling up beneath our desolation, provide us with oases. To put it differently: yesterday has not done its part until it has nerved us for today. It is as though we had a bank account of joy upon which, when deposits cease, we draw. Then the glory of yesterday becomes today's thanksgiving in the wilderness.

II

Let us imagine the worst. Yet not all, even of the past, is lost, while happy memories remain. Furthermore, our obligation to the past remains. *There* is another affirmative. The heritage of the past remains, about us and within. Our bodies, our minds, our spirits, our opportunities, our whole environment are different because of it. How can we repay our sweetheart's confidence, our father's labor, our mother's hope, though they were taken from us when yesterday was taken? We need not mention student's vigil, ar-

tist's agony, martyr's blood poured from the heaped-up past into the greedy present, commingling imperceptibly with all the common goodness of our day, even with every printed page and every mechanical contrivance. Try as we may, we cannot escape this heritage of hope, sacrifice and pain. We are under debt to all the years. That debt remains.

Similarly, in more immediate and personal relationship, Robert Louis Stevenson could write of abiding obligation to a lost love:

> Let love go, if go she will.
> Seek not, O fool, her wanton flight to stay.
> Of all she gives and takes away
> The best remains behind her still.
> The best remains behind; in vain
> Joy may she give and take again,
> Joy she may take and leave us pain,
> If yet she leave behind
> The constant mind
> To meet all fortunes nobly, to endure
> All things with a good heart, and still be pure,
> Still to be foremost in the foremost cause,
> And still be worthy of the love that was.

So, when the world seems drained of all its sweets, we may remember that not all, even of the past, is gone. Our happy memories remain, and may become oases in our desert. Again, our obligation to the past remains: the duty to be worthy of our heritage of kindness, purity, hope and sacrifice. Here are two affirmatives: memory of the past and duty to the past, around which life can be rebuilt. Establish the things that remain.

III

The future remains. Indeed our final obligation to the past is our obligation to the future: to move, that is, out of yesterday into today and tomorrow. This is not faithlessness to the past, as first it seems. This is keeping faith. For what did the past exist? For itself, in its own right? Perhaps. To prepare us for the future? Perhaps. But not to imprison us against the future. Today calls, and tomorrow. To chain ourselves to a dead past were to break faith with the living past, and with the living present, and with the living future. That is something which the Pharisees of Jesus' day never could understand. Yet it is as true of religion as of any other aspect of life. To keep faith with the living past, we must walk out of the dead past into the living present and the living future. We must rebuild life around its affirmatives. Whatever else be lost, the future remains. *That* is an affirmative around which to build.

"But the future is empty," we say, "which does not hold the past. We have no relish for it." Forgive me: that does not matter in the least! We are out of the realm of indifferent choice, if ever we were in it. Responsibility is thrust upon us. We are under obligation to the future to set in motion widening rings of saving influence, instead of weeping or "cussin'" at home. That is an affirmative. And that remains.

Having said this, let us quickly add that that empty future will not long be empty if we go into it like that. "Remember," wrote Aurelius, "on every occasion which leads thee to vexation to apply this principle: not that this is a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune." When the universe takes away with one hand, she gives with the other, if we will accept the gift. One of these gifts, though it comes wrapped in duty, is healing for our wounds.

The United States stood on the brink of the First World War. As though that were insufficient burden for one heart, the President's wife was taken at that moment by death. Then a friend wrote to the President: "Under such circumstances there is comfort and relief for the sufferer in resolving that he will thereafter do everything in his power to help other people who are suffering or bereaved. . . . In such an effort you would find great consolation." Of course! For that is to rebuild life around its affirmatives. It is to move into the future, establishing the things that remain.

IV

Happy memories remain. Obligation to the past remains. The future remains. God remains—God who gave the past, God who holds both past and future in his hand. That throws our whole problem into a new dimension. Remember Job: how his world was drained of all its sweets—possessions destroyed, sons and daughters killed, health broken, friends turned critical. Do you remember the climax of the story? Out of the whirlwind God speaks. Then a new Job answers: "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee."

A modern man whose world had crumbled rose from his knees, washed his face and went out upon the street. There he was greeted by a friend: "Well, you look as though you had received good news in this morning's mail." The heartbroken man did not reply, for he was amazed. He looked as though he had just had good news! Then, in a flash, he understood. "It was not this morning's mail," he might have said. "It was this morning's prayer. And if it's news you're looking for, it is the great good news that God abides."

When life is stretched taut and thin, almost ready to be rent, then it becomes peculiarly translucent. If there be behind it only darkness, it is known. If there be light behind it, that is known. "Let your light so shine . . . that men may glorify your Father, who is in heaven." That is not an exhortation to pious self-consciousness. The light is not our own! God forbid! That is a statement of our duty to transmit the light of God. And we shall not know that the light shows through. We shall know only that it shines within. And we shall be lost in gratitude as Charles Kingsley was lost in gratitude: "Must we not thank, and thank, and thank for ever, and toil and toil for ever for Him?" Then the light may shine through!

Suppose that

> . . . falling with (our) weight of cares
> Upon the great world's altar-stairs
> That slope through darkness up to God,

we should look up and see him for ourself. Suppose!

Suppose that he should lay his hand upon us. Suppose he should create in us a new heart and a new mind. Suppose he should assign new tasks, or old tasks raised to higher levels, and send us into the empty future in his name? Empty! Would we not exult: "O joyful emptiness, that brought such fullness at the last!"

So, when life is shaken from its old foundation, and the world seems drained of all its sweets, let us seek diligently the things that remain and rebuild life around its affirmatives. More is left than we at first imagine: roses and violets, and sun and moon. And happy memories remain, which may make oases in our desert. Obligation to the past remains: we must be worthy of our heritage. The future remains. God remains, who holds both past and future, yea, and our own lives also, and his hand. Establish the things that remain.

On Borrowing Trouble

By Lavens M. Thomas II

DANTE, the Italian poet who wrote "The Divine Comedy" in the early years of the fourteenth century, once became involved in strife between certain warring factions in the city of Florence, Italy. Asked to serve as a mediator, he agreed to go on a mission of peace to the pope at Rome. During his absence the flames of anger and hatred spread; his own house was burned; all of his property was confiscated; and he himself was exiled from his native city. He yearned for home and yet had to journey on from town to town to live among strangers. One day, worn out by the journey and weary of spirit, he came upon a monastery off the beaten highway and there he saw the monks quietly working in their garden. Monasteries were not only the theological seminaries of that day; they also served as temporary homes of refuge for the tired and weary, where one might stop and find lodging for a day or two. For days they had had no visitors; suddenly they heard a knock at the gate and upon throwing the bolt and opening it, there stood Dante, tired, disheveled in appearance, forlorn.

The monk knew him at once. "What do you want, sir?" he asked.

"I want peace," said Dante.

We all want peace these fear-ridden days, and we all need peace at times, not to escape from responsibilities but for periods of quiet, rest and meditation, that we may be able to take a long view of things and plan the better for the days ahead.

This Sunday morning when millions abroad are engaged in the brutalities of warfare and millions here at home are hurriedly busied in the preparation o war materials so that we may serve as "the arsenal fo democracy," I invite your attention to seven strang and yet very sane words spoken by Jesus in anothe crisis of the world's history. When speaking to me and women who had been harried at times by th Roman legions, the Tiberius Caesar then in Mussolini' stead in Rome, with the heavy hand of foreign op pression hanging over their heads and the shadow o the cross looming up ahead for himself, he gave thes words for guidance in their day-by-day living: "Tak therefore no thought for the morrow."

I

Consider first what Jesus did *not* mean when h cautioned his worried disciples by that advice. Strang words are those for a minister who has a sermon t prepare, if he were to follow them literally on a Sat urday when he should be making final preparation fo the service of the morrow! Certain it is that Jesus di not mean that men are not to make careful plans fo the future, that they are to display blind faith in Go and not make wise use of the God-given power to rea son, to plan wisely and well. The psalmist's injunc tion, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," refers t burdens of sorrow and distress which man in his ow limited strength cannot bear; but there is no counse to "cast all thy problems upon the Lord," for the nee to exercise foresight and planning was constantl stressed by the Master.

Sometime ago the beloved Quaker leader, Dr. Rufu Jones, speaking in the Friends' Meeting House o North Charles street in Baltimore, told of the time fifty-odd years ago, when he was editor of the *Ameri can Friend*. One day he received a letter from a sub scriber, one who was evidently objecting to the em phasis of the editor upon "Come, let us reason together saith the Lord." Wrote the subscriber: "Whenever go to church, I always feel like unscrewing my hea and placing it under the bench because in a *religiou* meeting I never have use for anything above my col lar button." My. word! Does religion concern th heart only? Not according to Jesus. One day when h was asked by a lawyer as to what commandment wa first of all, his answer was made up for the most par of material familiar to his hearers, verses taken fro Deuteronomy and Leviticus. However, his reply con tained something new too, for to the commandmen to love God "with all thy heart, and with all th strength, and with all thy soul," as found in the sixt chapter of Deuteronomy, Jesus added, "and with al thy mind."

Time and time again he stressed the fact that ther is a definite place for advance planning, else worry ma enter. Speaking to his disciples one day as to the cost o discipleship, he cautioned them to weigh well in ad vance the issues involved. To drive home the necessit for intelligent planning in this area he used the tw parables of counting the cost.

"For which of you," he said, "intending to buil a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cos whether he have sufficient to finish it . . . . Or wha

king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?"

Here Jesus was perhaps alluding to recent instances of folly, cases that his hearers knew about, for that was an age of ostentatious building and reckless warfare. He was emphasizing the fact that becoming a disciple of his was at least as serious a matter as any costly or dangerous undertaking. The lesson is not so much, "It is better not to begin, than to begin and fail," but rather, "It is folly to begin without much consideration."

So when he said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow," one must read that in the light of the context. Surely it is no counsel for thoughtless living, for blind faith in God or for hasty action. In matters religious, as in all other phases of life, one is to make full use of the divine gift of reason in advance planning.

II

Consider in the second place, however, just what Jesus *did* mean by those rather strange words of advice. We need to take them to heart today as did his hearers then. He meant to emphasize at least two things, the first being this: that it is best for men—best physically, mentally, morally, spiritually—to live one day at a time, and thus do no undue worrying about tomorrow.

In that almost terrifying, at times revolting and yet strangely fascinating book, *Out of the Night,* a Communist leader says to an impatient recruit: "Before the war they sent me to prison for ten years. I soon learned that I couldn't do ten years all at once. I did one day at a time, and so it was easy."

Years ago in California, so Robert Quillen tells us, a famous old naturalist began to cut trees to build a log house, whereupon a friend who knew his purpose and his age said to him: "Isn't it too large an undertaking for one man who is no longer young?"

"It would be," chuckled the naturalist, "if I looked beyond the chopping of the trees and sawing of logs, and pictured myself laying the foundation and erecting the walls and putting on the roof. Carrying the load all at once would exhaust me, but it isn't much of a job to cut down this little tree, and that is my only undertaking at the present moment."

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow," said Jesus, and his words are psychologically sound. He was cautioning men to live one day at a time, asking them not to borrow trouble from tomorrow, for "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." His urging them to do no worrying about tomorrow was a health measure, not merely a religious doctrine, and psychiatrists today are teaching it to some who did not learn it in time.

For the most part wild animals live placidly except when in the presence of danger; man is the one animal that borrows trouble from his imagination, and Jesus would not have it thus.

One May evening in 1871 a young medical student, twenty-one years of age, was pacing back and forth across his room in the Montreal General Hospital. He was quite worried and upset, with his final examination looming on the morrow. Later on, speaking to a group of Yale students, he said: "I was much worried as to the future, partly about the final examination, partly as to what I should do afterward." While walking to and fro across that room he happened to pick up a copy of Carlyle's works and on the page before him he read this familiar sentence, "*Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.*" He resolved to be guided by that philosophy, in keeping with the wisdom couched in the words of our text, for he well knew of the dangers in the paralyzing worries which he was borrowing from the tomorrows. In living one day at a time, his duty then and there was to make final preparation for the examination, and to get a good night's rest, and that is what he did. That young medical student was William Osler, later to become one of the four founders of the famous Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore, in later years to return to his native England and be knighted by the king. "The load of tomorrow," he said near the close of his life, "added to that of yesterday, makes the strongest falter." Fortunately he himself, for the most part, had followed out the wise philosophy of Jesus, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow."

Most of the worries that we borrow from tomorrow are unnecessary, aren't they? In imagination we come to streams that have not been bridged, most of which streams we will never have to cross; in imagination we face enemies, most of whom we will never meet in reality; in imagination we are beset by worries which appear like mountains but which, when actually met, may be mere molehills. To those of us who, like the young medical student, William Osler, are troubled along this line, Jesus' words ring out: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for itself." Live *today,* knowing full well that new light will break and new strength will come as we move forward.

III

Consider finally one other thing that Jesus was stressing when he said to his disciples, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." What a wealth of meaning is wrapped up in that one word, "therefore"! It emphasizes the fact that we are not orphans in this world; it reminds us that we may confidently build one day at a time, knowing full well that we have the wise interest and constant support of the Father.

More than once on that occasion Jesus stressed this comforting and challenging fact. "Behold the fowls of the air," he said, "for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" And again, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin . . . Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

As the author of I Peter has it: "Humble yourselves

therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

There is no promise here that our every desire will be met exactly as we want it to be, for we are finite and may ask fervently but not well; but there is the promise that we can depend upon the wisdom and mercy of God, in this law-abiding universe, to reward us richly for our faith and love.

There is no pledge here that we will be miraculously exempted from many of the sorrows which life inevitably brings, but it does stress the fact encircled in this verse: "Yea though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, *Thou art with me.*"

There is no support here for the belief that faith in God will free man from paying a dear price if mistakes are made by careless planning or unwise living, but it does give the comforting assurance that at all times, both in fair weather and foul, the merciful interest of God is ours, to help us make the best of every situation.

Years ago, back in the 1870's right after the Civil War, a brilliant young Southerner was heroically battling against the ravages of tuberculosis, before the days when that disease could be checked and, in many cases, cured. Because of the realization of his own helplessness, he had come to a quieting and stabilizing faith in the adequacy of God. In this case, man's extremity had become God's opportunity. Come what may, he was resolved that he would not borrow trouble by worrying about tomorrow, or the tomorrows, and that serenity was due to his firm belief that one's life is built upon the goodness and the greatness of God. Listen to Sidney Lanier's faith as it rings out in this song-poem, "The Marshes of Glynn":

> As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod
> Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God;
> I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
> In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the earth and the skies;
> By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod,
> I will heartily lay me ahold on the greatness of God.

Sidney Lanier died not long after that at the early age of thirty-nine, but he died victorious, certain as to the morrow. He well knew—as we should know—that if we live our best *now,* we can trust him to guide and keep us *then.*

Sidney Lanier was thirty-nine when he died, and Jesus was only thirty-three. The One who said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow," died just a few months later, yet all the while he was steadied by such a faith in the goodness and greatness of God that as the shadows fell he could say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Have we been unduly, needlessly worried at times, borrowing trouble from the future, adding to the load of yesterday the burden of tomorrow? Let us be done with it! We will carefully, prayerfully make such preparation for the days ahead as we can, both for ourselves and for others, yet at the beginning of each new day we will resolve to live that one day, knowing full well that such strength and light as we need will be available day by day. We will not expect to be exempted from many of life's trying problems, for in them life's metal is tested and through meeting them come deeper wisdom and greater strength. In the midst of every crisis, however, we can have the abiding assurance that back of us are the infinite resources of our Father, God.

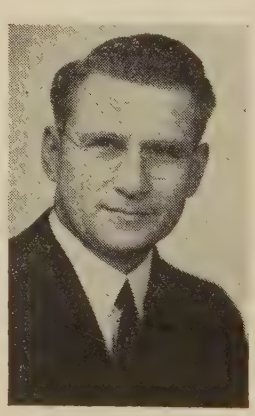
Behind the Display Window

By Armin Haeussler

For a man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. I Samuel 16: 7b.

They (the scribes and Pharisees) look well on the outside, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead, and all that is unclean. So you outwardly appear to men to be upright, but within you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Matthew 23: 27, 28 (Goodspeed).

WE cannot go through life without noticing the outward appearance of men and things. Jesus was well aware of that and had no objection to having people pay due attention to neatness, orderliness, personal presentability. I cannot believe that Jesus abhorred cleanliness like some of the so-called "saints" of India. According to the Gospel record, he wore a seamless robe—the best his mother or any other Jewish mother could make for her son. If outer appearance were a negligible matter, Jesus would not have denounced the scribes and Pharisees with the blazing invective recorded in Matthew 23.



Every person, every phase of life, and every event has some sort of display window. Far more than we realize does the show window reach into the fields of the moral and the spiritual. The average American thinks only of its significance in the world of business. No one will deny the importance of the store front to the man who owns the business, for the display window, when properly planned, appeals in some way to a human want or need. The front is the display section of the store, while the interior is the selling section. If the business is to be successful, the two sections will have to be planned as two integrated parts of a complete design. A live merchant wants a window which will not only shine, but outshine the others along the same street.

In these days of visual education even libraries have gone in for window display. Pictorial presentation of the value of books has greatly increased their circula-

tion. Here too there is a focal point, a general theme, around which the display is built. Since highly effective displays demand much thought and planning, a new profession, that of the professional window dresser, has come into being.

Merchants know that better windows sell more goods. They should be so radiant, attractive and appealing that the passer-by will become the passer-in. The effective window creates the impression that there is a store of quality behind it. Show windows, then, are important because they give the store a certain prestige, and above all things reflect the personality of the store. They must, therefore, be an integrated part of the store.

Now, what we have said about the appearance of a store front we may also apply to the outward appearance of a person. Every psychologist knows that personal appearance is a factor in the development of personality. That is seen in the home, where the child is given due guidance in keeping clean; and later, when the child, grown up, applies for a position, he finds that personal appearance weighs heavily with employment managers.

As the display window is the face of the store, so one's countenance, attire and bearing should radiate the real personality of the individual behind him. But this matter of integrating the outer self with the inner reality is not an overnight development. Some people do not believe this, and attempt to have their faces changed by some expert in the "beauty" business. And when the outer self is thus camouflaged, in this or some other manner, detection of the real person behind that front window is not easy; but when this camouflage is made doubly deceptive by the addition of a seeming uprightness and piety, as in the case of the scribes and Pharisees, exposure becomes doubly difficult.

I

Let us note, in the first place, that a display window should never be used for purposes of deception. It should not be a symbol of dishonesty. Business firms and corporations cannot afford to disregard this principle, although some attempt to do it.

During the depression years an automobile corporation, in a desperate effort to promote sales, resorted to false advertising. Billboards throughout the country and the leading magazines carried their advertisements showing a model in the higher price brackets for only $995. This car was likewise seen in many show windows and advertised at this price. The president of a Detroit banking corporation walked into one of these salesrooms, told the salesman that he wanted the car in the display window, and handed him a certified check for $995. Somewhat embarrassed, wringing his hands, and clearing his throat, the courteous salesman said that the price was a bit higher, that the price tag meant F.O.B. Detroit. The prospective buyer replied that he lived in Detroit and would be glad to pick up the car. After considerable more conversation the salesman finally admitted that the automobile could not be delivered for less than $1,400. He then called the head executive, who took the customer to his private office. Imagine the astonishment of the buyer when he was asked: "Are you an agent of the FBI? Just what is the purpose of this call?" No sale was made because the head of the firm had no intention of selling that model at such a low figure.

The customer, however, did not let the matter rest there. He registered a complaint with the Interstate Commerce Commission with the result that action was taken by the federal government against three automobile corporations guilty of the same fraudulent practice. The hearing was never held, for, with a "Cease and Desist Order" hanging over them, the companies made haste to cancel such advertisements and to promise that thereafter the price quoted would include all extras.

How stupid it is to try to make men believe a lie! As soon as a man is generally regarded to be a liar, he will find his fellow men disbelieving him even when he tells the truth.

How about deception in the field of athletics? In certain sports, such as football, victory is usually achieved by the use of plays involving deception. Is that ethical? The late President Eliot of Harvard witnessed a football game with much disgust and exclaimed: "Why, those fellows are trying to deceive each other!" His observation was correct, but his conclusion that football is therefore a bad game was ridiculously wrong. Dr. Eliot was an oarsman and liked regattas. In rowing everything depends on physical strength. Unfortunately he could not appreciate games of strategy and therefore misjudged them. Some games are more than a mere matching of strength and skill; they are just as much a battle of wits. There is a vast difference between being deceived and being cheated. Under certain conditions deception is a proof of generalship, and is consequently applauded, while cheating is outside the rules and therefore despised. A baseball pitcher may practice deception by throwing a curve ball, but he is not permitted to fool a base runner with a balk. A football player may pretend to be carrying the ball when in fact it is in the possession of a teammate. But no player may hide the ball under his jersey since that is not fair. What is "fair"? Whatever is agreed to under the rules, including some forms of deception such as feints, but not all.

There are religious sects which are opposed to the theater because of the element of deception in drama. Yes, it is deception, but it is not a lie. The most telling dramas are those in which the element of deception is most pronounced. Sometimes we forget that the actors are just acting and that we are in a theater. "We not only consent to be fooled" when we buy our admission ticket; "we hope to be." We are grateful to the actors for making of the stage a front window of some of the most moving and thrilling realities of life. The legitimate use of delusion, fiction or illusion should therefore not be confused with falsehood.

II

In the second place, a display window should emphasize quality. The best show windows reflect excellent workmanship and genuineness. The average man does not care for low-grade substitutes or adultera-

tion. The Germans do not care for "ersatz" foods made out of wood pulp or weeds. We Americans have little use for men in public office who employ "ghost writers." Plagiarized speeches may be as attractive as a dazzling display window for a while, but eventually the men who give them are required to "deliver the goods." What if there is almost no stock behind the front window to deliver? While it is true that absolute originality is a rare thing, an educated person should be able to restate the truth in his own way. Someone has said a thing first, while someone else has said it best.

The scribes and Pharisees were not genuine. They were counterfeits in the realm of the spirit. They looked all right on the outside, but according to our Lord they were full of "all that is unclean." He added: "So you outwardly appear to men to be upright, but within you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness." These leaders of the Jewish social order and its religious forces were retarding the progress of their land and people with their hypocritical lives. At best they attained only an average degree of morality. For them there was a period after the sentence: "For man looketh on the outward appearance." Jesus reminded them in no uncertain language that God looks upon the heart.

Our Lord sought to enthrone the genuine, the vital and the real. The world eventually despises the crook in business, the quack in medicine, the mountebank in religion. The scathing denunciations of hypocrisy in Matthew 23 from the lips of Jesus still have a blistering effect. The modern hypocrite stands no higher than the scribes and Pharisees. To him, too, applies a word of Jesus in another chapter in Matthew: "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." He did not condone the sins of the flesh, but he made it clear that the sins of the spirit, such as hypocrisy and envy, are worse and worthy of stronger condemnation. The outer appearance of publicans and harlots revealed what they were, but the display windows of the scribes and Pharisees attempted to conceal their true selves. They were sadly lacking in inner soundness and vigor. Although outwardly they were still being accepted as the religious leaders of the people, continued affectation, pretense and double-mindedness had undermined their inner lives. Inner untruthfulness is a form of suicide, and spiritual deadness finally can be no longer denied.

Thomas Carlyle, that rugged, forthright Scotchman, said: "The crowning hypocrisy is a false priest." False prophets undoubtedly belong in the same category. Periods of great prosperity have always produced a plenitude of false prophets. The kingdom of Israel, far wealthier than its southern neighbor, the kingdom of Judah, also had a much larger number of ecclesiastical toadies. Only occasionally did some Micaiah ben Imlah arise to oppose the false counsels and preachments of the prophets hired by the king to say what he wanted them to say. The Micaiahs of history have usually been unpopular, but they have refused to be silenced by popular clamor. Strange, isn't it, how quickly some prophets can change their front windows! For instance, the world is usually skeptical about a man who one day is a pacifist after a fashion and the next day a militarist after more than a fashion.

Isaiah was one of the really consistent prophets of all time. Although the land was "full of silver and gold," it meant nothing to him, for he came from a wealthy and aristocratic family. He knew full well that the land had large estates, abundant imported luxuries, including many thousands of horses and chariots from Egypt, a strong military establishment, a flourishing religion, and crowded temple courts. All this made an attractive display window. But what was behind it? Exploitation of the poor, eviction of peasants from their lands, corruption of justice, a second-hand religion that "went through the motions" but ignored the real demands of God. Isaiah spoke out against such hypocrisy and incurred the ill will of the nation. What a debt the human race owes to men of that type! What a tragedy it is when conversely the spirit of hypocrisy is enthroned in the temple of truth!

When Frederick Douglass, bold, vigorous and eloquent leader of the colored race, lectured in the 1840's under the auspices of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, he had great difficulty in getting churches in which to speak. The minister would refer him to his board chairman, whose reaction was usually stated in words like these: "I don't know about this. We must ask the Lord. Let us pray." Douglass added: "When they prayed with me they never gave me the church." Facing the race question again with all of its ramifications and difficulties we had better do it in very realistic fashion and go farther than the display window on the matter. Singing and preaching about "peace on earth, good will toward men" will be just a hollow mockery unless we work for a new world order in which every race and nation will have equal opportunities. The reign of international cant and hypocrisy must cease.

III

In the third place, let us note that a Christian is in truth a display window in his community for Christ and his church. Alas, many church people seem to forget that. They make poor show windows because they are not exhibit-A Christians. Christ said to his followers: "Ye are the light of the world. If the light that is in you be darkness, how great will the darkness be."

To be an effective show window, it must be a sort of platform or plateau. A well-lighted window secures business-getting comment. Light and color play a big role in obtaining that result. If a person can make Christianity attractive in his own life, many will want to pattern their lives after his. If all Christians were really Christians there would be no talk about "the lost radiance of the Christian religion." Droopy, dyspeptic-looking Christians unwittingly misrepresent the unlimited mass of faith behind the display window of the church, the faith that is "the victory that hath overcome the world."

A great Gothic cathedral, the frozen poetry of Christian art and worship, is something that holds one enthralled. It takes more, however, than the architecture and outer appointments of a beautiful house of worship to draw people to church Sunday after Sunday. Great

preaching by absolutely genuine men in the pulpit, plus great witnessing by equally sincere laymen in the pews, will do it. The best decorative motif for a church is a congregation of church members conscientiously trying to learn God's will and to follow Christ.

Jesus said to his followers of every age: "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Let there be friendly and wholesome rivalry in trying to outshine one another as Christians. This can be entirely in keeping with the spirit of him who would have us excel in Godlike living. Just as a business house that would increase its sales volume cannot overlook the important item of service, so a church must never become satisfied with mere treadmill activity, but ever develop new ways of meeting human need. A static church never gets anywhere. Such a church is so afraid it is going to die that it has not yet begun to live.

One of my friends, dean of the chemistry department of a college, traveled for some years for one of the great pharmaceutical concerns. When, a few years ago, a number of mislabeled containers of "sulfa" drugs had failed to stop a wave of deaths caused by pneumonia in a certain area of the country, I asked this friend if such mistakes had ever occurred while he was in the employ of that great business house. "During those years," he replied, "my firm sent out products under 450,000,000 labels. Only seven mislabelings were discovered; these were rectified immediately, one of them at great cost to the company. This was a record for accuracy probably never equaled by any other firm." The label was the display window of every bottle, carton or container, indicating what was inside. A Christian should be a label for Christ and his church. How many of us are mislabeled? How many of us are like certain "big front" policemen—"invincible on parade, but invisible on duty"?

One of the great preachers of the early church was St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan. He was much interested in the esthetic phases of the Christian religion, particularly music. To him Christ was indeed the great, beauteous Light of the world, the radiant Personality of all time, who would have all of his followers combat the works of darkness. In a glorious hymn written by him back there in the fourth century, Christians of every age are summoned in compelling language to be sincere seekers and practitioners of the right and true:

> O splendor of God's glory bright,
> From light eternal bringing light;
> Thou Light of life, light's living Spring,
> True Day, all days illumining,
> Confirm our will to do the right,
> And keep our hearts from envy's blight;
> Let faith her eager fires renew,
> And hate the false, and love the true.

CHRISTIAN citizens should now feel a great responsibility and see a great opportunity. They know that strength and safety do not come from material things, but from things of the spirit. They know that true greatness is incompatible with narrow selfishness and that power cannot be divorced from broad responsibility.

JOHN FOSTER DULLES.

The Great Blue Heron--Our Brother

A SERMON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BY FRANKLIN D. ELMER

A GREAT BLUE HERON came flapping clumsily up the stream and settled down in a marshy spot among the cattails for an evening of fishing. His long crooked neck held his head just above the dry brown blades where he could both watch for fish and keep his eye on those suspicious characters in yonder rowboat. A strange mixture of grace and awkwardness he made in the setting of the muddy stream and the high banks and the budding trees. Such was our thought as we looked at him.

Moving slowly up the stream, we came too close for Brother Heron's comfort, and he stretched out those two huge wings, jumped up out of the water, almost fell in again as he took hold on the air, folded his lanky legs back into a trailing position, and loped further upstream to a new and safer position. Herons have not lived all these years without learning to keep their distance.

Strange creature, looking like some relic of a bygone age in earth's development! Yet a creation of God just as truly as man. Out of the dust it was formed; from the Creator it received the spark of life; with the instinct common to all living things it mates and rears a family and finally dies leaving other generations to carry on the species.

How much do we humans have in common with our brother, the Great Blue Heron! From the same substance we are made, of the same necessity we spend much of our days in quest of food, by the same fundamental processes we leave other generations to go forward with what we have learned. To be sure, we steal our "feathers" from the back of the sheep, and condition our food with the use of fire, and build our "nest" out of boards or brick instead of twigs. And when we fly we use metal wings and get our power from deep in the earth. Life for us is more complicated and in many ways less leisurely. But it rests back upon the same spark of life which can have only a divine source.

We can only understand ourselves, our animal natures and our natural facilities when we see ourselves as a part of Nature. After all we do have much in common with the "lilies of the field" and the "birds of the air."

But it is not enough to say this. Man is more than the Great Blue Heron. The Heron has no aspiration except to be a Heron. Man aspires to be a God!

Quotable Verse

Peace

O BROTHER, lift a cry, a long world cry
Sounding from sky to sky—
The cry of one great word,
Peace, peace, the world will clamoring to be heard—
A cry to break the ancient battle-ban
To end it in the sacred name of Man!

EDWIN MARKHAM.

Why?

THE men of the earth said: "We must war
As the men of the earth have warred;
'Tis ours to wield on the battlefield
The unrelenting sword."
But they who had seen the valiant die,
The fathers of men, they answered, "Why?"

The men of the earth said: "We must arm,
For so we would reveal
The nobler part of the human heart,
The love of the nation's weal."
But they who had sung their lullaby,
The mothers of men, they answered, "Why?"

The men of the earth said: "We must fight,
For so the fit survive;
By the jungle law of fang and claw
The strong are kept alive."
But a crippled, cankered progeny,
The sons of the culls, they answered, "Why?"

The men of the earth said: "We must fall
And falling build the road
O'er which the race with quickening pace
Can find its way to God."
But down from a Cross uplifted high,
The Savior of men, He answered, "Why?"

ROBERT FREEMAN.

Architects of Dream

WE cannot rest, whose hearts are like the breaker
That pound forever in rebellious moan.
We cannot rest, who are the bright awakers,
The trumpeters that mock the tyrants' throne.

We are the architects of dream, who cherish
A beauty others never learned to feel.
The towers that we build shall never perish,
For they are reared of spirit, not of steel.

We cannot rest, whose tongues are quick with pity
For those who ply the ponderous wheels of toil,
The builders of the unsurrendering city,
To stand upon the new fraternal soil.

LUCIA TRENT.

Victims

O PITY not the soldier dead who lie
On bloody fields—poor, cheated sons of fate
But pity us who still hear war fiends cry,
Who see a world that perishes with hate.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

These poems are taken from *1000 Quotable Poems* and *Poems for Life,* compiled by Thomas Curtis Clark and published by Willett, Clark & Co. Used by permission.

A Pastoral Prayer

BY JAMES CROSWELL PERKINS

O THOU CREATOR SPIRIT in whom we live and move and have our being, again we come from the hurry and strain of our daily lives into this holy place to direct our thoughts to Thee. Earnestly would we seek those gifts of the Spirit that are granted to those who ask and seek and knock in the name of the Christ. We humbly pray for gentleness in our moments of irritation, for quiet courage when panicky fears assail, for faith when doubts oppress our minds. Thou art ready to do far more for us than we can ask or think; may we learn better to appropriate our rare privileges as children of the Highest.

Help us to be loyal to our best when life hurts. May we learn to quit ourselves like brave men and women. Teach us the patience and perseverance of Thy saints of every age. Guide us into a better understanding of the finer distinctions between right and wrong. In this hour of reverent thoughtfulness we ask that our consciences may be quickened, our imaginations cleansed and our strength renewed by the power of Thy Holy Spirit.

We pray for those who suffer and struggle for causes that are dear to us, for all ambassadors of kindness and good will, for all who are thinking, working and planning for a better world. At this hour may we remember without bitterness those who through their leaders' treachery have become our enemies.

Eternal Father, forgive what has been wrong in our lives and strengthen us in our purpose to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Thee. And at the last may we be among those who have fought a good fight for character and who have held fast to the Christian faith. We ask it all in the Master's name. Amen.

Sermon Outlines *from* PULPIT Readers

Laws of Success in Prayer

I. *Introduction—We must realize our need of prayer.* Jesus, our example, needed it. Spend much time in prayer. Useless, stupid substitutes for worship are: False notion of necessity for human progress; self-reliance, shown in modern secularism; nationalism; ultra-modernism in theology; reason and knowledge unaided by faith. Our world today is an illustration, not that God has failed, but of our need for a vital, real, spiritual worship. Prayer is the Christian's vital breath!

II. *Body of Sermon*—1. We can learn to pray only by praying. "Take with you words," said a prophet. "Go and speak to God!" "*Ask,* and ye shall receive."

2. *Use the great prayers of the church and Bible as models.* "After this manner pray ye," said Jesus. These prayers show us what men of all communions and ages have thought of God—the basis of all real praying. They also give us the language which has been used in prayer. An example: *Book of Common Prayer.*

3. *Study the prayer life of Jesus.* He was praying, at baptism, when the Voice was heard. He fasted and prayed forty days; the devil came and tempted him, says Matthew. Prayer helped him to resist temptation. He went up into a mountain, Luke tells us. It was while he was praying that his face shone and his garment became dazzling. Recall Gethsemane; the Cross; the day he prayed when the people, perhaps even the disciples, wished to make him a king. Our Lord needed divine guidance and help. How much more do we!

III. *Conclusion.* — Persevere in prayer. Spasms of praying will do little good. Spasms of evangelistic effort are an insult to the intelligence, unless we are evangelistic all through the year. A congregation, a church, which glows, grows and goes for God is a praying congregation or church! *(Robert S. Lawrence, Kingscreek Methodist Church, Urbana, Ohio.*

Through Tragedy to Triumph

(Funeral Sermon)

Text: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.—Psalm 23:4.

I. *Introduction*—Tragedy strikes so fast at times that it is difficult to withstand its onslaught. But the psalmist had learned through experience that there is a secret for facing the hour of darkness: "for Thou art with me." No one has adequately explained the presence of evil and suffering in the world, but this we do know—that with God's presence we can come through triumphantly.

II. *Body of Sermon*—1. With God in our lives we can build a *reservoir of power.* There is a certain resort which has a series of three lakes, each higher than the other. The lower one is used for boating and swimming, the other two are for storage. Rain falls into all three lakes. But when a dry spell comes and the water becomes scant in the lower lake, the manager merely opens the dam-gates on the upper lakes. That is life! If we can store up higher supplies of faith and power through God's presence, when tragedy comes we have these inexhaustible stores to draw upon. 2. God's presence in our lives brings *courage to face the crisis.* One day a British minesweeper was about to set forth on a trip. Before the boat left, a short service was held on board. The captain asked, "Are we all here?" The men replied, "All here under God's care." "Of what then are we afraid?" The reply came, "We are afraid of nothing!" One can, through ordinary courage, face the common crises of life, but when terrible tragedy comes it is only through knowing the presence of God that we can face the emergency. 3. The presence of God provides for us the *follow-through power of faith.* No tragedy is over in a moment. That is why God's presence makes so much difference. It is the follow-through of faith that spells final victory. It carries us beyond tragedy, beyond death, to the triumphant assurance of eternal life.

III. *Conclusion*—Today, in this tragic hour of grief, let us look to the divine presence of God in our lives as the reservoir of power, the source of courage to face the crisis, and the provider of the follow-through of faith. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." *(Hoover Rupert, Methodist Church, Thayer, Kan.)*

Toward Better Speech

A Free Forum for the Discussion of Slips of Speech or Manner

From a professor's list of the most frequently spoken words, errors in student preaching among the second twenty-five:

ON is ***ON***—short "o"; not awn.

WAS is ***WOZ***—short "o"; not wuz.

WITH is ***WITH***—the *th* as in then, not as in thin.

WHICH is ***HWICH***—not wich.

Georgia: "Why should comma and period always come inside quotation marks? (As indicated in this column.) That is not the English custom which is simple enough and logical." Comment: True, but it is the American way—the practice of leading newspapers and publishers. Reference: The columns of THE PULPIT for a sentence ending with a quotation. Nothing could be more simple than always to put period and comma inside quotation marks.

Accents to watch: ***i(r)-REV-o-ca-ble;*** not i-re-VOK-able. ***di-RECT;*** not DIE-rect. Babel is ***BAY-b'l,*** not babble. Shechem is ***SHEE-kem,*** not as sometimes heard, SHEK-em.

From *The Minister as Prophet* by Charles E. Jefferson: "The best English spoken anywhere ought to be heard in the Christian pulpit. Many ministers are inexcusably careless on this point. There are men who go on mispronouncing familiar words for years, and it seems as though the mispronounced words are the very words which most frequently occur. There are in almost every congregation cultured people to whose ears a mispronunciation is a blow, and a person of taste cannot be struck again and again on the same nerve without the nerve crying out in pain. Use the dictionary and use it often. Keep it beside your Bible. . . ."

Contributions for possible use in this colum should be sent to

AUBREY N. BROWN,
Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, W. Va.

The Miracle of Words

By Chester J. Oxley

WORDS! We shall glory in them. Let them call forth noble deeds to match their brilliance and give to man's far prospect a habitation in a name. Puzzled by them, we shall go on using them. These words—"by which we confuse confusion . . . words by which we cut a long story short; words by which, far likelier, we stretch a short story long . . . a Lodore of words, Life and Roget's Thesaurus arm in arm." Samuel Johnson may have made his dictionary by main force and awkwardness but he was sustained through all the drudgery it involved by the conviction that while "words are the daughters of earth, the things they stand for are the sons of heaven." Through the intermediary of speech, things get translated from the shadowy limbo of the possible on to the footlit stage of the actual. Some things never do get so translated.

> The song that I came to sing
> Remains unsung to this day.

● *Ships Bearing Heavy Cargoes*

To the disciplined imagination of Gauis Glenn Atkins, "words are like ships setting out across uncharted seas, carrying cargoes of meaning. . . . Once launched and freighted, a word is subject to many hazards. It may be good for only a little coastwise trade, a cautious craft laden with some little perishable meaning, unfit for high adventure. Other words are fit

> To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
> Of all western stars . . .

through their rightness for some enduring need of life and no gulf ever washes them down. Messiah is a word like that. For words like poets

> . . . are the movers and shakers
> Of the world forever, it seems."

One can be too much the word merchant ever to bring anything to pass. Bunyan saw that Talkative's house was "as empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savor." In the Day of Judgment, one may keenly regret if he has been a spendthrift with his tongue. If we must then give account for every idle, pointless word we have spoken, there are bound to be some rather lengthy explanations. An artist who works in words, plays with words, feels the charm of words, scarcely knows which to admire, their aching emptiness, or their appalling power.

● *Peril of Empty Words*

Words may have *aching emptiness:* always aware of something within the living act of perception that twinkles and glimmers and will not be caught: "the sad incompetence of words": Saying the unsayable is like trying to put the flower show on the radio. A few words, but what is to be done with all the mounting beauty and color

Bachrach
CHESTER J. OXLEY

and fragrance the microphone cannot pick up?

On all sides we suspect further meanings, glimpse circles beyond circles of intention and the reach of the actual phrase. Eye hath not seen, no hand has painted it; ear hath not heard, lips have not spoken the things which God hath ready for those who love him.

Jesus warned of the emptiness of words and the resort to the occult manipulation of them in verbal ecstasies on the busy corners of busy streets. "When you pray, do not repeat empty phrases as the pagans do, for they imagine they will be heard if they use words enough." That were but a vain and fruitless dependence on words.

Some confuse the hollow echo of emptiness with the thunder of power. How stupid for anyone to think that the world of things behaves as he makes his words behave. It is not that sort of world. The ultimate insincerity arises from handling feeling in an attempt to make reality say, not what it wants to say, but what we want to hear it say. All feeling has an exaltation which seems to make it superior to facts. Ignorance untethered by fact and with a good emotional take-off can rise swiftly to a Coughlinesque stratosphere. But things are not cured in this tough world, as in an old Lapland myth, by singing of their causes.

● *Words of Power and Grace*

Words may have *appalling power.* St. Paul baptized deep in God's love was able to shove hot words together that fused at a touch. In his psychograph on Dwight L. Moody, Gamaliel Bradford noted that words were practically the only weapons in his arsenal and marveled at the power of those diminutive puffs of breath, those airy vibrations, power which lay sometimes in the vast suggestion of thought they carried but sometimes, alas, in the mere intonation, the music, the resonance of the voice that put them forth. Only let the right word be said, for words fitly spoken are as apples of gold in pitchers of silver.

Jesus came speaking the happy words and men gave him a surprised entrance into their long-locked lives, making a home for him in the secrecies and sanctuaries of the soul. We are his men who believe that it is better to be counted among the persuasive voices of earth than to belong to the coercive world's harsh and bitter compulsions.

● *Jesus Was 'the Word Made Flesh'*

He was the Word made flesh and as he spoke the miracle was wrought and the flesh became words within the reach of human calculation. In the Hebraic sense, his words are spirit and they are life. He is "Deity's eternal alphabet, from eternity to eternity his Alpha, from eternity to eternity his Omega." In the home-town synagogue at Nazareth, the villagers could see a word fulfilled before their eyes as he read from the scroll of Isaiah, for the spirit of the Lord was upon him. Amazed crowds heard winning words of grace fall from his lips, words weighed not with the dogmatism of authority but with the authority of discovery. No man ever so spake. "Which is easier to say, Thy sin be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" There were no easy words for Jesus. Even yet all there is of weariness and disappointment, or suffering and doubt, in all men stretches out for some small share in

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This is part of an address given at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School by Mr. Oxley, until his death some months ago minister of the First Baptist Church, Granville, Ohio. It was sent to The Pulpit by members of the faculty of the seminary, with request that it be given publication.—The Editors.

that love that bade the labor-laden, "Come unto me."

● *'These Sayings of Mine'*

What grand words Jesus has given us to proclaim! "And he said unto everyone, If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." "Unto everyone, if anyone"—what words of particular inclusiveness! We leave the last word for him to say. "When they could not fasten on what he said, they said nothing more."

In the midst of many words, some offering ought to be made as a sacrifice to silence. "He who possesses the words of Jesus," said Ignatius, "is truly able to hear his very silence." "He effects more by his silence than others by all their talking." His words left silent spaces all around in them in which the soul may grow. He was the Word in words.

In a concluding moment, let us recall him speaking. His words came down to us vital and vascular; if you cut them, they bleed:

> Everyone that heareth these words of mine and doeth them shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rains descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon the house and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock; and everyone that heareth these words of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand: and the rains descended and the floods came and the winds blew and smote upon that house and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

When Jesus had finished these sayings, the multitudes were astonished and in the solemn hush of their joy they poured a silence round those words as if to hold them forever in a frame.

Service of Prayer for Service Men

LEADER:

Gathered here at our autumn homecoming, we remember the men and women of our church who cannot be with us because duty to country compels them to serve the nation in places far away.

They are often in our thoughts, but especially tonight we lift hearts and voices in the affirmation of our faith that though space separates us from them, we can still be united in mutual trust and in shared loyalty to Christ and his purpose for the world.

HYMN:

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find,
His service is the golden cord
Close-binding all mankind.

In Christ now meet both East and West,
In Him meet South and North;
All Christlike souls are one in Him
Throughout the whole wide earth.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In unison):

Almighty God, whose will is our peace, we acknowledge and confess that we have shared in the world's sin, whose bitter fruit is now the portion of our human family. Mercifully forgive us and enable us to turn from the ways that lead to war and strife. Guide us even now in the ways that shall lead to a just peace. Create in us new hearts that shall make us fit to live in the new world of tomorrow. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

READING OF THE NAMES OF SERVICE MEN WHO HAVE GONE FROM OUR CHURCH

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

(To be read responsively):

O Thou, who through Thy prophets hast taught us to pray for one another, we remember the men of this congregation who are now in the service of their country.

We pray for those who are working in camps, that they may be kept faithful, not only in the tasks that are theirs to perform, but in the influence they exert upon their comrades;

Upon our men in camps we pray Thy guidance and sustaining presence.

We remember those who sail the high seas amid dangers of wind and wave and of hostile action by an enemy;

Upon our men on ships we pray Thy help and protection.

We remember those who fly the skyways, that they may be kept steady in the face of danger and brave in the hour of trial;

Upon our men in flying ships we pray Thy strength and fortitude.

We remember those who must face the ordeal of battle, that they may be upheld in the dark hours, and that they may never lose sight of the true goal for which we strive;

Teach them and us the way to reach a community of good will among men, wherein we may learn to be brothers under the love and lordship of one Divine Father.

We remember all of our men as they wage the inner warfare: the warfare against loneliness, against hatred, against temptation, against despair;

Help them on that unseen battle ground to fight a good fight, and preserve them in honor and integrity. As it is Thy will, shorten the days of war's devastation, and return our men to the tasks of peace again. This we ask in the spirit of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

(This service was used last autumn at the Homecoming dinner of Hyde Park Baptist Church, Chicago, Rev. Rolland W. Schloerb, minister. On this occasion a world map giving locations of men in service was presented to the church. This service may offer suggestion to other churches that wish during the coming autumn to remember their men—and women—in war service.)

Sentence Sermons

The people always listen if they become convinced that a man is speaking by the authority of God.

Jesus did not come to correct the world's creeds, but to reorganize its conduct.

One mark of a great soul is the burden he carries upon his heart in behalf of his people.

Every generation has to rewin its liberties and work out its own salvation.

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOLLOWING a five-year pastorate at the Normal Park Baptist Church, Chicago, Rev. WINTHROP S. HUDSON has recently become instructor in the history of Christianity at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Three years ago he received a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago.

Since 1920 Rev. A. D. CORNETT *has served as* minister of churches in Ontario, Canada, and now leads the activities of Simcoe Street United Church, Oshawa, Ont. His education included a year in the United Free Church colleges in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Rev. WILLISTON WIRT *is minister of First Con*gregational church, Eugene, Ore., on the edge of the campus of the University of Oregon. In earlier years he was for a time in business on the coast and later held posts in the religious education field. He is at present serving as a chaplain with the United States army.

During the past four years Rev. JOHN U. STEPHENS has been assistant minister at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, where Dr. Buttrick has long ministered. A graduate of Princeton University and the seminary there—also of Union Seminary, New York—Mr. Stephens taught at Princeton-in-Peking, 1924-26. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church two years later.

Rev. LAVENS M. THOMAS II *spent two years in* the pastorate of the Methodist Church, South, and was then elected professor of religious education in the theological department at Emory University, Ga. He is at present on leave of absence from the university.

Ordained in the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1913, Rev. ARMIN HAEUSSLER has held a number of pastorates, and since 1934 has been minister of St. Lucas Church, Evansville, Ind. He has also taught comparative religion and other subjects in a number of schools and has done invaluable work in the field of hymnology.

Rev. JAMES C. PERKINS *is minister of the Con*gregational Church, Groveland, Mass.

Rev. FRANKLIN D. ELMER *is minister of the Bap*tist Church, Lockport, N. Y.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

EARL E. G. LINDEN, Memorial Congregational, Muskegon, Mich. "Sensible Men and Evil Times." Eph. 5:15, 16—"Be very careful, then, about the way you live. Do not act thoughtlessly, but like sensible men, and make the most of your opportunity, for these are evil times." (Goodspeed)

E. H. TRABERT, St. Michael's Lutheran, Oakland, Cal. "The Divine Priority." I John 4:19—"We love, because he first loved us."

ADDISON L. SMITH, First Methodist, Rochelle, La. "Meet God Half Way." James 4:8a—"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, First Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Prayer and Your Trouble." Psalm 50:15—"Call upon me in the day of trouble; and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

JOHN VAN EMAN BERGER, First Presbyterian, Portage, Wis. "A Salute to the Future." Heb. 11:13—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

.....
Title of sermon

.....
Text used (write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

.....
Address

ARDEN W. COE, Olivet Presbyterian, Utica, N. Y. "One Faith for One World." Eph. 4:5—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

HARRY J. COLVER, JR., First Evangelical Reformed, Bethlehem, Pa. "Victory Gardens of the Soul." Gal. 6:7—"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

AUBREY BURNS, Fremont Methodist, San Diego, Cal. "The Surgical Gospel." Matt. 18:8—"Wherefore if thy hand or foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."

WILLARD C. MELLIN, First Presbyterian, Oakmont, Pittsburgh, Pa. "A Moral Equivalent for War." II Tim. 2:3—"Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

KENDRICK STRONG, Mt. Desert Larger Parish, Seal Harbor, Me. "The Gospel Lend-Lease Program." I Pet. 4:10—"Whatever the gifts which each has received, use them for one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (Montgomery)

LAWRENCE S. ASHLEY, Central Christian, Elkhart, Ind. "Woe-begone Christians." Matt. 6:16—"When you fast do not look like hypocrites, for they look woe-begone to let men see that they are fasting." (Moffatt)

J. PAUL COLEMAN, Community Methodist, Mariposa, Cal. "Religion Is Not Rationed." Matt. 5:6—"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

RALPH READ, Community, Wyoming, N. J. "Perverted Religion." John 16:2—"The time is coming when anyone who kills you will imagine he is performing a service of God." (Moffatt)

C. SAMUEL OVERMYER, St. Paul Evangelical, Waterloo, Ind. "The World's Greatest Question." Acts 16:30—"What must I do to be saved?"

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

ON THE DAY these words are being written good news comes from all fronts—including the home front. In the three theaters of the fighting war, the United Nations are making significant, if not all of them rapid, advances. Russia has withstood Germany's powerful offensive, launched this time much later in the summer than after the two previous fighting winters, and has now seized the offensive with substantial gains. In the South Pacific, MacArthur and his American and Australian forces are well on the way in their task of capturing the Solomons and New Guinea, thus clearing out the bases from which Japan threatens Australia. The British, American and Canadian allies have not only landed in Sicily but are advancing swiftly northward on the eastern coast toward Messina, and into the interior from the southern beaches. How long these advances can continue without stiff and bloody resistance cannot be guessed, but if the surrender of Syracuse is any criterion there is some ground for believing that the Italian forces, who are the main body of the defenders, are not fighting wholeheartedly. On the home front, the drastic action of President Roosevelt in cutting through the scandalous controversy between Mr. Wallace and Jesse Jones by abolishing the BEW and shifting certain functions of the RFC elsewhere, and in announcing that further public disputes of this nature will mean the automatic resignation of the participants—all this comes like a fresh breeze of reassurance to the nation.

Good News on All Fronts

The Book of the Month

KNOW YOUR BIBLE SERIES. *By Roy L. Smith. In twelve volumes (the first three now issued). 64 pp. each. 25c each; 6 for $1.40; 12 for $2.50. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.*

I AM fascinated to the point of excitement by the appearance of the first three paper bound volumes of this series. Here is a new kind of catechism. Each little book asks and answers more than 200 questions about the Bible. This means that Dr. Smith, editor of the *Christian Advocate,* has undertaken to formulate and answer 2,400 questions in the twelve books! But the formidable framework of the project is matched by the simplicity, the clarity and the scholarship of the answers. Dr. Smith has submitted his text to a board of editors who have gone through it with expert eyes for any possible improvements, but the mark of the author is on the whole work—as to both substance and style. Dr. Smith is famous for his pithy interpretations of religion—"sentence sermons," he used to call them. He speaks to the lay mind in the layman's language. When he hit upon this method of providing both group and private instruction on the Bible, he struck a rich vein. We have had catechisms designed to inculcate in youth an understanding of Christian doctrine. But this voluminous catechism will bring the Bible to life again in every church where it is used. It will equip church members with an intelligent understanding of the nature of the Bible, how it came into existence and what its major contents mean. If I were a pastor again, I would start now to organize many (not too large) conversational groups in my church for next year's study of these books. Would they learn? Would they be fascinated? Would they!

A Thought for the Month

FOR a long time, a process of diluting the Christian faith has been going on in Protestantism. The historical definiteness and objectivity of Christianity have been and are being blurred by the attempt to accommodate it to the so-called "mind of the age." It is assumed that the state of mind which dominates modern culture is the standard by which all things, not excepting Christianity, must be judged. But this state of mind is indifferent, if not hostile, to the idea that God uniquely revealed himself, once for all, in certain historical events which centered in the person of Jesus Christ. What should Christian teachers do in these circumstances? The answer given by a certain form of liberalism is that we must "adapt" the Christian faith to the "needs" of the modern mind as these "needs" are defined by the modern mind itself. It seems not to have occurred to these "interpreters" that this modern mind had gone off on a side road, and that its real and greatest need is to be brought back by the gospel to the highway of Christian faith. The attempt to meet these pseudo-needs has resulted in such a whittling away of historical Christianity that what is left can hardly be called Christianity in any recognizable form. I want to challenge this whole idea of bending and fitting Christianity to the so-called needs of people. That the preacher of the gospel must adopt a mode of presentation which arrests attention and wins a response goes without saying. But Christianity does not allow men to define their needs and to demand a religion that satisfies the needs thus defined. It is Christianity's own business to define the needs of the human soul and of human society, to evoke a consciousness of these deeper and everlasting needs, and to meet them with the everlasting gospel. Christianity is no weather vane, pointing in any direction according as the wind blows. And before the Christian teacher bows too low in obeisance before the mind of his age, let him make sure that with the same obeisance he is not bowing Christian faith off the scene. Many among us are playing fast and loose with the Christian gospel instead of uttering it with its own authority.

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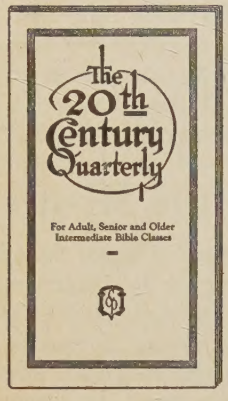

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